172 778 341 strengthened by twigs and beams. As might be expected with such building materials, the architecture is generally simple and undistinguished. A few structures rise twenty or thirty feet; some boast true arches and some have several stories. In general the models followed are Indian and Iranian. The three basic elements of every shrine, whether rock-cut or free-standing, are a square or circular cell, a large statue or symbol of Buddha, and a passage permitting processions to go completely around the Buddha image.

172 778 531 In addition to the central Buddha figure the temples were often decorated lavishly with other sculptured Buddhas, Bodhisattvas (beings destined to attain Buddhahood) goddesses, Lopakalas (guardians of the directions), and so forth. The statues ranged in dimension from slightly over life-size figures in almost full relief to small sitting Buddhas surrounded by aureoles which were used as decorative elements together with floral and leaf motifs. Commonly the figures were made of stucco or mud strengthened with reeds or straw at the core.

They appear to have been cast in molds, often with separate forms for face, hair, ears, arms, legs and other parts; then joined together and attached to the wall. Variations could be introduced in the facial expression in the finishing-off process before the statue was completely dry. Afterwards it was coated with a thin layer of clay or plaster, painted with water colors, and gilded with gold leaf. Although in many cases the pigments have been washed away or destroyed, all figures seem to have been originally touched up in this way. In some temples whole walls were covered with a succession of such statues but sculptural representations of scenes comprising more than one figure are rare.

172 778 532 Even more striking than the statues are the mural paintings. Almost every inner wall and ceiling is completely covered with frescoes. Large dramatic compositions depicting scenes in the life story of the Buddha or the various future Buddhas are framed in decorative bands and flanked, perhaps, by row upon row of seated Buddhas. Overhead vaults are filled in with stylized moun-

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tain landscapes made up of many small segments each of which illustrates a Buddhist legend. Winged Gandharvas (a kind of angel) and celestial musicians may be fitted into triangular spaces above eye level so as to give the impression of floating above the worshiper. Animals real and fabulous, flowers, trees, palaces, war equipment, and pleasures of the hunt are among the many subjects included in the relations of the various myths or the surrounding ornaments. Well-known divinities of classical Greece as well as many-armed Indian gods are to be found adopted into the Buddhist pantheon. Some frescoes consist of assemblages of these divinities. Others depict Buddhist heavens and hells. A frequent sight is that of Buddha preaching to a group of monks. Monks are also pictured together with benefactors — noblemen through whose contributions the holy work of temple decoration has been financed.

The donors are typically represented in the clothing of the locality and the age, as contrasted with the monks and divine figures whose costume is prescribed by the canons of Buddhist art. Even more interesting are the facial and other physical characteristics of these patrons. Here we have an astounding variety of human types — European and Levantine as well as eastern Asiatic. The evidences would point to a succession of alien conquests with each new set of rulers inscribing themselves as patrons of the existing Buddhist monasteries. Since, however, the warriors generally came from peoples of lower material and artistic level, their tastes did not greatly or immediately affect the content and style of the monastic art. The paintings appear to have been made either by monks themselves or by artists working under rather close religious supervision.

All frescoes are in tempera or water color applied directly to the smoothed and plastered wall while the surface was still wet. In each group of shrines the palette is limited to a modest number of colors and tones. The few colors used are employed with considerable effect. Gold leaf is occasionally added. In some instances the drawing appears to have been by means of tracings

1: Lattimore H-4 (no date) 1950 AI1 Sinkiang AI1

172 778 or stencils; more typically the murals were sketched in with a free hand. A distinctive feature is the emphasis on outlines, which are almost invariably darkened and slightly thickened.

• 532 In addition to these sculptures and frescoes, there were found several examples of smaller arts. Particularly noteworthy are painted wooden panels which were deposited at the feet of Buddha statues as votive offerings. Some paintings on paper and on fabric appear to have been designed for the same purpose, or for temple banners. The illustrated Manichaean manuscript fragments found in Khocho are amazingly similar to the early medieval Christian book art.

172 778 531

Among the wooden items are small reliquary caskets and statuettes, as well as carved ceiling beams, brackets, and other structural elements.

Woven or embroidered textiles seem to have been in large part imported into Central Asia from China, Persia, and other areas. Although Khotan was reputedly famous for its rugs, it is impossible to prove that any particular rug fragments are of Khotanese manufacture.

172 531 Among the various ruins the earliest period is represented by the secular dwellings at the Niya site, and by the stupas of Miran. Amid the shifting sands and scrub-covered cones in the desert north of the present village of Niya, Sir Aurel Stein was able to trace remains of a whole community. In addition to the ever-present stupa there were ancient houses, courtyards, cattlesheds, arbors, orchards, trellises, irrigation canals, and even a footbridge over the old river bed. Broken wooden posts rising above the gaunt earth proved to be the original supports of wattle and plaster walls of old residences.

Some houses of substantial size suggested that the occupants were men of position. From the drift-sand filling the floors of the rooms Stein was able to salvage fairly well-preserved wooden beams and brackets fallen from the ceilings, and fragments of furniture such as chair legs. These were carved with animals, rosettes, pots of leaves and other decorative motifs particularly characteristic of the Gandhara school of sculpture which flour-

1: Lattimore H-4 (no date) 1950 AI 1 Sinkiang AI 1

ished in the area of India's northwestern frontier in the first and second centuries after Christ. This art is often described as "late classical," or referred to as Graeco-Buddhist, since its content was Buddhist while the style was strongly affected by the Greek art of the Hellenistic (post Alexandrian) kingdoms of western Asia.

Stein also uncovered at Niya a large central hall with stuccoed walls still standing several feet high. These were decorated in tempera with a colorful design of floral scrolls and festoons. Coins and dated documents on wooden tablets indicated that the settlement was abandoned near the end of the third century A.D.

In the time of its prosperity Niya seems to have been included in the territory not of ancient Khotan but of the kingdom of Kroraina which stretched to the shores of the Lob lake. The rulers of Kroraina were probably most closely allied in culture and language with the Kushan kings of Gandhara and northern India; but in the Tarim Basin they came under Chinese hegemony. Ruins of a town called "Lou-lan" (the Chinese transliteration of *Kroraina*) were discovered by Sven Hedin near the edge of the old lake bed; and Aurel Stein found in the homes and shrines of Lou-lan carved woodwork of the same types as at Niya.

Further remains of the Kroraina realm are the third- and early fourth-century temples at Miran, where the earliest of the Central Asian wall paintings were found. The frescoes originally adorned the interior walls of two small domed shrines. Both were square structures on the outside and circular within, with a small stupa in the center. In each the passage around the stupa was decorated with a band of painted busts: youthful winged male angels in one shrine, garland-bearing lads interspersed with a great variety of cosmopolitan-looking men and women in the other. The upper wall and dome showed more conventional religious scenes such as Buddha preaching to a group of monks, and Buddhist legends.

In coloring, painting technique, and total effect, these Miran murals resemble amazingly the Hellenistic frescoes of approximately the same period which have been discovered at Fayum in Egypt and Dura-Europos in Syria. An inscription on the thigh

1: Lattimore H-4 (no date) 1950 AI1 Sinkiang AI1

172
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of a white elephant in one of the Miran pictures records the name of the painter as "Tita," which Sir Aurel Stein takes to be a rendering of the Roman name Titus. Stein fancies that the artist was a "Roman Eurasian" who had followed his calling eastward along the highroad to China. A larger temple also at Miran displayed along its base a series of statues of seated Buddhas about double natural size. The stylized hair curls, elongated ears, and elaborate drapery of these figures once again suggested that they followed the Gandhara models.

Stein also discovered a vast gallery of statues of a similar type lining both the inner and outer faces of a wall enclosing the court of a great stupa at the desert site of Rawak, not far from Khotan. Buddhas and other sacred figures of varying dimensions were ranged side by side, with little apparent order. While most of these figures were draped in classical flowing garments, the Dvarpalas (Guardians of the Gates) wore a secular costume consisting of long under- and overcoats, trousers, and boots. No manuscripts or coins, however, could be found to give definite clues to the age of the ruin.

Far superior to the Miran and Rawak sculptures and much closer in feeling to the art of the ancient Hellenistic world are the statuettes of wood and clay and the broken-off heads of statues found at Tumshuk, by Pelliot and Le Coq. Just north of the oasis town of Maralbashi, the Tumshuk ruins are not far from Kashgar and Yarkand, where routes through the high Pamirs lead into the Tarim Basin from the west. Three flat-topped cliffs rising above the marshy plain bear the remains of temple clusters of various dates. The earliest shrines appear to have been destroyed by fire before the beginning of the fifth century. It was in these that the Gandhara-style pieces were found. A few surviving fresco fragments include a frieze of kneeling monks and a scene of Buddha preaching to armed and regally garbed followers.

The great mass of painting and sculpture illustrating the middle period in Central Asian art — from the fifth century to the eighth century A.D. — comes from the neighborhood of Kucha.

1: Lattimore H-4 (no date) 1950 AI1 Sinkiang AI1

The *Ming Oi* of Kyzyl comprise several hundred rock-cut caves ranged along several levels on a series of steep cliffs overlooking the Muzart River. In addition to temples of various sizes there were workrooms, storerooms, and sleeping quarters. The most common type of shrine consisted of a square room with a niche for a sacred image in the center of the wall opposite the door. On either side of the statue, a corridor led back to a transverse passage, permitting the worshiper to make the required complete circle about the image. The ceiling was usually in the form of a barrel vault. A few temples had round cupolas and a few others had stone-cut imitations of the "lantern" roof (composed of a series of squares of diminishing size laid diagonally one above the other and leaving open a small aperture at the very top) still found today in Persia and Kashmir. Each of these cell-like temples was furnished with a small vestibule. Long stone balconies and flights of steps gave access to the temples and connected them with each other. Practically no daylight penetrated to the inside of the cells; the decorations must have been executed and enjoyed only by use of lamps.

Le Coq and Grünwedel were able to uncover wall paintings in some sixty of these caves. The frescoes abound in drama and motion. Buddha, in the scenes from his life and in the familiar teaching, meditating, and other poses, is given a human and gentle aspect. The Bodhisattvas, worshipers, kings, queens, Brahmans, ascetics, monks, dancers, musicians, servants, demons, and other personages who surround the Buddha or play roles in the illustrations of the Buddhist legends display a great variety of complexion, feature, figure, garb, expression, and pose. All appear to be active participants: a courtier turns his head to talk to a neighbor; two Brahmans carry on a lively dispute; a supplicant prostrates himself at Buddha's feet. In one particularly effective panel, a king who is taking a ceremonial bath in a tub of butter receives news of Buddha's demise by means of a painted cloth held up before him by a minister. On the cloth are pictured the four "great events": the birth, enlightenment, first sermon, and

1: Lattimore H-4 (no date) 1950 AI1 Sinkiang AI1

death of Buddha. Several depictions of the burning of Buddha's corpse are notable for the intensity of sorrow communicated by the mourners.

Although the compositions are intricate and the available space tightly packed with figures and background designs, the main contours stand out clearly. Color schemes are based on muted brown, flesh, and rust tones, accented with bright blue and green.

The donors portrayed in the Kyzyl caves (usually on the wall near the entrance) are at first glance astonishingly like knights and ladies of medieval Europe. Tall, fair-skinned, and red-haired, they wear dresses and armor of the style prevailing in Persia under the Sassanian Dynasty from the third through the seventh centuries. The cloaks and gowns appear to be of fine brocade or richly embroidered material. An unusual hair arrangement in which the top locks are cut to a length of about four inches and allowed to fall loose on either side of a center part is characteristic of both men and women. Frequently a stylized flower, perhaps a development of the classical cornucopia carried by certain figures in the Gandhara sculptures, is held in the hand.

Both the style of the paintings and the decorative motifs employed give evidence of a blending of Indian, Persian and late Hellenistic influences. Many resemblances can be pointed out between these Kyzyl murals and the famed wall paintings of the Ajanta cave temples in Central India, which were executed at roughly the same time. Only rarely, however, do the figures in the Kyzyl pantomimes approach the sinuous grace and delicacy of the best work at Ajanta. Perhaps the closest comparison, outside of the Tarim Basin, is with the frescoes in the caves surrounding the colossal Buddha in the valley of Bamian, near Kabul, in Afghanistan. Chemical analysis has indicated that identical pigments were used. This tie between Kucha and Bamian, which had been a Buddhist center since about 100 A.D., suggests one path along which Buddhist art progressed into Central Asia.

At Kumtura, about nine miles east of Kyzyl along the Muzart River, is another group of cave temples. As at Kyzyl the various temples could be placed approximately as belonging to the fifth,

1: Lattimore H-4 (no date) 1950 AI 1 Sinkiang AI 1

sixth, seventh or eighth centuries. Similar architectural styles were followed and similar medieval-looking benefactors were depicted. In subject matter and treatment the paintings are clearly related, but in some of the Kumtura caves is an unmistakable Chinese element, nowhere glimpsed at Kyzyl. The eyes of the Buddhas are just slightly tilted, the landscapes are more freely drawn, and typical T'ang Dynasty cloud forms appear overhead.

Sculptural remains brought from Kyzyl and Kumtura consist mainly of severed heads of goddesses, Bodhisattvas, Brahmans and other personages. The statues were sometimes grouped on balconies, sometimes arranged in separate niches along the walls. The heritage of the Graeco-Buddhist traditions of Gandhara is amply demonstrated in facial features, hair treatment, head ornaments, and, where full figures are shown, in the drapery.

Contemporary with the Kyzyl and Kumtura caves but quite different in style are the group of shrines belonging to an old monastery at Dandan Oilik (in the words of local treasure seekers, "the place of houses with ivory") in the desert near Khotan. Each shrine originally consisted of a square inner cell enclosing a large Buddha statue on a pedestal. This cell was surrounded by a square perambulatory. Both inner and outer walls were decorated with paintings — for the most part of large Buddhas or saints in a checkerboard pattern. On the whole these figures are stiff and rather indifferently drawn. A few representations of legendary scenes include one particularly graceful water nymph of decidedly Indian inspiration. The donors, pictured as tiny figures kneeling at the feet of the large Buddhas, are markedly Chinese or Mongol in appearance.

Decorative stucco reliefs of small Buddhas, saints, and flying Gandharvas, and remains of larger statues, followed the Graeco-Buddhist pattern but achieved no particular distinction. Perhaps the most interesting art finds of the Dandan Oilik site are the considerable number of rectangular wooden panels each about a foot long. They were apparently intended as gifts to the shrine from secular patrons. On these tablets appear sure-handed and

1: Lattimore H-4 (no date) 1950 AI1 Sinkiang AI1

172
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spirited sketches of Buddhist divinities and legends, some in full color. A particularly attractive drawing shows Rustan, the great Persian hero, as a handsome four-armed Bodhisattva.

Dandan Oilik, by all indications, was abandoned gradually, because of increasing difficulty of irrigation, around the end of the eighth century.

The art of the ancient city at Shorchuk near the Kharashahr oasis reaches into the third and final stage of the Buddhist culture of the Tarim Basin. On the direct route eastward from Kucha to Turfan, Kharashahr was never so important a political power or Buddhist center as its neighbors. Nonetheless great numbers of temples and shrines were found both in the old town and on the ridges of the mountains at its side; there were also a few cave temples cut out of the hills. Most of the shrines appear to have been destroyed by fire in the tenth century, but to have existed for several hundred years before that. The ruins were particularly rich in statuary, many pieces retaining the original coat of bright paints. As well as the familiar Buddhas, Bodhisattvas, and goddesses in more or less pure Hellenistic style, there were found deities of distinctly oriental appearance and some remarkably realistic horses and camels. Many examples were provided of the variety of heads which could be produced by skillful use of a limited number of molds.

The Shorchuk wall paintings ascribed to the seventh, eighth, and ninth centuries demonstrated even more clearly than the sculpture the intermingling of eastern and western peoples and cultures. The Buddhas, monks and Gandharvas of these frescoes have consistently Far Eastern features, but each monk carries between his prayer-joined palms a long-stemmed flower reminiscent of those held by the donors of Kyzyl. The benefactresses at Shorchuk are slant-eyed, long-nosed, and rather stocky women who can be identified with considerable confidence as belonging to one of the tribes of Western Turks which held sway over Kharashahr for some centuries. The use of deep colors and the presence of stylistic details such as very cursive outlines show strong Chinese influences.

1: Lattimore H-4 (no date) 1950 AI 1 Sinkiang AI 1

The latest phase of Central Asian art is most amply illustrated in the Turfan region. The oases of Turfan and Kara Khoja, strategically placed for intercourse both with China to the east and the grazing lands of Jungaria to the north, served as the seats of more or less powerful kingdoms from before the beginning of the present era. The various archaeological explorations found not only two old capitals, Yar Khoto ("the city on the ravine") and Khocho (Kao ch'ang in Chinese; also Idikutshahri and Dakianus) but a number of semi-isolated monastic establishments in the environs. Pieces of sculpture, paintings on paper and silk and various other small objects of art were purchased from local treasure seekers as well as directly excavated. In the circumstances, the dating of many finds is only conjectural. Several markedly Hellenistic heads fall in this category.

Certain buildings within the old city of Khocho and a few of the sites at Toyuk, Chikkan Kol, and Bezeklik have been clearly shown to belong to the sixth and seventh century. The extant wall paintings in these ruins are on the whole similar to those of the Kucha and Kharashahr oases. In some of these temples, painted medallions on the ceilings substitute for the earlier carved-out imitations of the lantern roof.

From the middle of the eighth century Turfan came under the rule of the Uighur Turks. Before coming to Turfan the ruling Uighur Khans had been converted to Manichaeism, a religion of Persian origin based on the opposition of Light (signifying Good) and Darkness (symbolizing Evil). In Turfan the Uighurs appear to have patronized Buddhism as well as Manichaeism and seem to have permitted Syrian or Nestorian Christians to follow their own faith. A mural which seems to be Christian in character was found covered up by an inner wall in a small temple outside the city walls of Khocho. A priest, in vestments which are clearly neither Buddhist nor Manichaean, holds incense in one hand, a vessel of holy water in the other. He appears to be blessing three persons of smaller stature who approach him, each carrying a long-stemmed leafy branch. The worshipers have the slant eyes of the Orient but the priest appears Byzantine.

1: Lattimore H-4 (no date) 1950 AI1 Sinkiang AI1

172 532 A fine Manichaean wall painting showing a priest of Persian features, possibly Mani himself, dressed in full canonicals and followed by several ranks of white-gowned and tall-bonneted *electi* (devotees under special vows of purity and abstinence), was similarly discovered behind a single layer of bricks. Presumably temples were cleared in this way for other types of worship. Illuminated pages of Manichaean religious texts and Manichaean temple banners, also found in various places in and near Khocho, show the disciples in the same costumes. Both men and women (*electi* and *electae*) are pictured, sometimes with hands clasped at the bosom and hidden muff-like in the robe, sometimes carrying or writing in books. In the book roll fragments and pages, the pictures and text, in a special Manichaean script, are combined to produce a total effect very similar to the early Christian codices of medieval Europe. Bright clear colors are used and the designs are kept fairly simple. Although unmistakably related to the general development of Central Asian art, the Manichaean finds actually constitute a separate and exotic growth with roots deep in third-century Sassanian Persia from which Mani himself sprang.

172 532 778 Buddhist art in Uighur times is best exemplified by the wall paintings of the vast majority of the temples at Bezeklik ("the place where there are decorations") near the village of Murtuk. Here a great phalanx of free-standing structures and rock-cut caves, some with structural antechambers, occupied a protected ledge between the river and the mountains. Hundreds of separate temples were still preserved in various stages of disrepair at the beginning of the present century.

A splendidly preserved set of murals was discovered in the temple which Le Coq numbered 9. Separate panels depicted groups of Indian monks in yellow with their individual names supplied in an Indian script, and Far Eastern monks in violet with both Chinese and Uighur names. All carried single long-stemmed flowers. The main pattern of decoration consisted in a series of Pranidhi or prayer scenes. Each one shows a large standing Buddha elaborately garbed and bejeweled and surrounded by an

1: Lattimore H-4 (no date) 1950 AI1 Sinkiang AI1

172
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elongated aureole. From five to ten figures are disposed about the Buddha in vertical columns on either side. Usually the two at the base kneel and present gifts such as food, lamps, or trays of flowers. A small Chinese house in a compound frequently is found in a top corner. Some of the worshipers are highly individualized and would seem to be portraits of particular monks or in one case of secular persons who are perhaps merchants. Other monks, however, and characters identifiable as Brahmans, spear-bearers, goddesses, youthful Bodhisattvas, and so forth appear in highly schematized fashion. The facial features of the Buddhas and the stylized attendant personages approximate a single type with narrow eyes, long noses, heavy jowls, and often a hairline mustache. The monks who seem to be drawn from life, however, exhibit much more variety. Several have red hair with blue or green eyes; some show red or gray stubble on the shaven pate, cheeks, and chin. Story elements are reduced to an almost unnoticeable minimum — a tiny raft underneath the feet of the Buddha, for instance, indicates that a seagoing legend is involved. Detail, in fact, rather than composition differentiates one Pranidhi scene from another. Profusion of ornament, sureness of line, and careful symmetry all contribute to an effect of great elegance and sophistication.

Occasionally tiny figures of donors are tucked in near the feet of the Buddha in the Pranidhi scenes. Full-scale pictures of the Uighur benefactors adorn small walls near the entrance of the inner temple. Like portraits of Uighur nobles in other shrines they show strong-visaged men with small mustaches and waist-length braids of black hair. They wear tall headdresses and floor-length gowns of embroidered material. The women have an elaborate puffed coiffure topped by a sort of crown. Once again each benefactor holds a blossoming stalk. Considerable care has been taken to present these donors as individuals and the names of many are inscribed on vertical tablets near the heads.

In addition to Pranidhi scenes and portraits of donors, the Bezeklik murals and the other wall paintings in the Khocho area dating from the Uighur period (ninth through twelfth century

1: Lattimore H-4 (no date) 1950 AI1 Sinkiang AI1

172 A.D.) cover a wide array of subjects associated with the Mahayana
532 sect of Buddhism. There are representations of the particular
778 heavens associated with various deities, and elaborate depictions of the tortures of hell. Chinese motifs appear in every context: deities sit in the windows of Chinese-style houses; children with Chinese-style pigtails sport on balconies. Particularly frightful demons with flowing hair, popping eyes and several arms are also common.

172 The end of Buddhist art in Turfan appears to have come with
532 the invasion of Jenghis Khan and the period of Mongol wars. The Uighur kings, who held on to the area a short while longer by submitting to Mongol suzerainty, turned with the Mongols to Islam. But great numbers of the people remained Buddhists right up to the fifteenth century. Many of the temples at such places as Bezeklik and the Sangim Gorge probably continued in use as places of worship and pilgrimage to that time.

174 Between the early murals of Miran and the latest work in the Turfan area lie almost a thousand years. Throughout this millennium a characteristic form of temple art flourished in the oasis kingdoms and reached occasional heights of outstanding excellence. This remarkable stream of creative production brings into question previous references to the area as no more than a highway connecting the ancient Eastern and Western Worlds, and to its civilization as the culture of the Silk Road. Considering the relatively small dimensions of international trade in ancient times, it would seem extremely unlikely that several dozen or even several hundred camel caravans a year could have supplied the economic foundations for such extensive artistic and religious enterprise. On the other hand the region abounds in evidences of much wider areas of cultivation supporting a much larger population in former periods than today. This agricultural prosperity, based on the known richness of the soil when properly irrigated, would go much further than the commerce of the silk route to explain not only why the Tarim Basin could afford so many monasteries and temples, but why it attracted a continuous stream of invaders.

563 538 199 668 [214] produced in Peking. A report from Peking on January 3, 1955, states that "some 200 books in more than 1.64 million copies were put out in 1954 in Peking in the languages of the minority peoples. They were published by the Nationality Publishing House for use among the Mongolian, Tibetan, Uighur, Kazakh and Korean peoples. These books include works on revolutionary theory, novels, and translations of Soviet literature. This total does not include books published by the many printing houses of the various minority areas." (Peking, NCNA, January 5, 1955, 1607 GMT-W.)

D. Artistic Expression

175 532 The period prior to the introduction of Islam produced the great works of art in Eastern Turkestan. The Shamanistic, Buddhist and Nestorian civilizations which were dominant in Eastern Turkestan in this period encouraged the religious expression through the mediums of painting and sculpture.

175 532 172 Late in the nineteenth and early in the twentieth century, European scholars went to Eastern Turkestan to explore the ruined cities which had long been buried under the sands, and which contained many of the pre-Islamic artistic treasures. It is through the efforts of these scholars that we have most of our present information on the subject. Among the best known of these explorers, who carried out extensive expeditions in Sinkiang, were Sir Aurel Stein, Professor Albert Grünwedel and Albert von le Coq of the National Ethnological Museum in Berlin and Paul Pelliot.

[648] Although the Chinese Government was quite tolerant at first and allowed these archaeological works and expeditions to take place, it later became concerned with the fact that so many cases full of artistic treasures were being shipped out of the country. From then on, the Chinese Government tried to put as many official difficulties in the way of these explorers as they could, and discouraged further efforts in this direction.

532 172 The important artistic discoveries were made at the following sites: near Khotan, the past capital of an ancient kingdom, at the oasis of Dandan Oilik, and at Rawak where a Buddhist shrine was found, and also in the twin oases of Turfan and Karakhoja, which proved to be extremely rich in artistic remains.

Most of the remaining structures which were fully or partially preserved are of an obviously religious character. They are usually shrines, temples, burial monuments, or various parts of monastic establishments. Most of them are products of Buddhist religious expression. Some buildings display the remains of Nestorian Christian and Manichaean murals. Manu-

[538] scripts were discovered in these sites which confirmed the simultaneous existence of these religions in the area for several centuries.

/Turkic Peoples of Sinkiang/

532
172

centuries.

Most of the religious structures in general followed the Persian and Indian patterns of buildings. Every shrine had a square or circular cell with a large image of Buddha in it, and included a passage where religious processions could take place and go all the way around the Buddha statue. Additional images of Buddhas, Bodhisattvas and goddesses decorated the temples. The statues ranged in dimension from over-life sized figures in almost full relief to very small figurines of sitting Buddhas.

The inner walls of these temples and the ceiling were often completely covered with frescoes. Dramatic compositions illustrating scenes and episodes from the life of Buddha, stylized mountain landscapes and illustrations of Buddhist legends were the subject matter of these frescoes.

Several examples of smaller art were also found in these temples. Of particular interest are the wooden panels, which were painted, deposited at the feet of the Buddha statues as votive offerings. Among the other kinds of votive offerings were some paintings on fabric or paper.

Sir Aurel Stein discovered the site of the ruins which belonged to the earliest historical period in Sinkiang: the secular dwellings at Niya sites, and the Buddhist shrines at Miran. Sir Aurel Stein found fairly well preserved wooden brackets and beams which had fallen from the ceilings, and parts of furniture. These objects were carved with many animals, flowers, leaves and other decorative motifs. The decorative motifs are strickingly reminiscent of the style of the Bandhara school of sculpture which flourished in India's northwestern frontier in the first and second centuries A.D. This art is often referred to as Greco-Buddhist, as its content is definitely Buddhist while its style is very strongly affected by the Greek art of the Hellenistic kingdoms of Western Asia.

Further remains of the third and early fourth century were found in the temples at Miran. The interior walls of these shrines were full of murals, containing scenes from the life of Buddha, Buddhistic legends, decorated with young men carrying garlands, and youthful male angels. The Miran wall paintings also strongly resemble the Hellenistic frescoes of the same period discovered in the Middle East, both in the techniques employed and in the general effect. Sir Aurel Stein holds the idea that they had been painted by a "Roman Eurasian." A large number of statues of similar nature were discovered by Stein in the temples at the desert site of Rawak, not far from Khotan.

Paul Pelliot and Albert von le Coq found small statues of clay and wood, and some broken heads of statues, which resembled the Hellenistic ancient art even more closely than the murals of Miran and Rawak. They were found in the Tumshuk

532 172 ruins situated near Kashgar and Yarkand.

Kucha is the site of many ancient works of sculpture and paintings dating back to the middle period of Central Asiatic art, which covers the period from the fifth to the eighth centuries.

Le Coq and Grünwedel uncovered many murals in the cave temples found in the vicinity of Kucha. The frescoes are characterized by the abundance of drama and motion. Buddha is the main subject of the frescoes, and many scenes from his life, in teaching, meditating and other poses, are portrayed. The other figures surrounding Buddha include the Bodhisattvas, worshippers, Brahmans, monks, dancers, musicians, servants and demons. They all display a great variety of features, figure, clothing, expression and pose. Muted browns, rust and flesh tones, accented with bright blue and green, form the basic color scheme of these frescoes.

(177) A blending of Indian, Iranian and late Hellenistic influences are evident in the style of the paintings and the decorative motifs employed.

The final stage of the pre-Islamic Buddhist culture in the area is represented in the collection found in Karashahr. It consists mostly of statues, some of them still preserving their original coat of paint. In these works of art we find the familiar figures of Buddha, Bodhisattvas, and goddesses done in a style which is strongly influenced by the Hellenistic culture. However, here we begin to find dieties of distinctly oriental appearance and some very realistically drawn animals (horses and camels). These wall paintings are ascribed to the seventh, eighth and ninth centuries and strongly illustrate the intermingling of eastern and western civilizations. The features of the figures clearly demonstrate Far Eastern characteristics, and the stylistic devices indicate a strong Chinese influence. (Most of the information on this section comes from Alice Thorner's chapter on Central Asian Art, in Pivot of Asia.)

An important scene of artistic discoveries in Kansu is the Tunhuang oasis, known as the Caves of the Thousand Buddhas, which Sir Aurel Stein visited in 1907. In this oasis hundreds of cave-temples are found, some of them dating to the fourth century A.D. The place was jealously guarded by an illiterate Taoist priest, who allowed Sir Aurel Stein to visit the caves only after a great deal of persuasion. Stein found thousands of paper scrolls, a large number of books in fragments and many paintings on silk and cotton in these caves. Most of the works of art (177) were Buddhist in character, and had a pronounced Chinese influence. A small percentage included Taoist and non-religious documents and works of art.

532 279 197 The conversion of the Turkic people of Sinkiang to Islam had tremendous repercussions on the artistic expression of the

/Turkic Peoples of Sinkiang/

532 region. A new type of art was introduced and adopted by the
779 people, and it dominates to this day. The set patterns of Islamic
[799] decorative arts and articrafts were transmitted to the Eastern Turki from the Islamic centers of civilization by way of Persia. Sinkiang, however, has not achieved so much in these fields of arts and crafts as did other Moslem countries, such as Persia and Turkey.

531 As statues and mural paintings of religious character are
532 strictly forbidden by the Moslem religion, the artistic expres-
779 sion is to be found mainly in the field of ornamentation. The decorative art is employed both in religious and secular objects—the walls of mosques as well as those of private houses; books, both secular and religious, and objects of daily use—are all elaborately ornamented in similar patterns. We find the same patterns of ornamental designs in mosque walls, in the beautifully woven rugs, in silk, embroidery works, brocaded caps, books, wood carving, leather and metal works. The most common patterns are geometric and floral ones. The use of human and animal figures is prohibited by the Koran, but the tradition allows their use in secular objects. The prohibition of the Koran is strictly observed in the decoration of mosques, Korans and other religious objects, but the rule is often discarded in other cases.

The most common motif in Islamic decorative art is the arabesque. The arabesque is an ornament composed of gracefully curving scrolls, crossed or interlaced and bearing stylized motifs suggesting a leaf or a flower. Besides the arabesque we find in Islamic art the representation of plants and filated and floral scrolls. The geometrical ornament is widespread in its use also, either by itself or in combination with arabesques or floral scrolls. Circles, lozenges, crosses, triangles, wavy bands and lines, form the simplest motifs of this kind of ornamentation.

531 Of special interest is the use of calligraphy as ornamenta-
212 tion. Arabic writing, in both the Kufic and Naskhi styles, plays
779 a very important role in Islamic ornamentation. The highly decorative characters are often elaborately intertwined with scrolls and sometimes terminate in palmettes. This art of calligraphy was cultivated from the earliest times of Islam. The formal style, the Kufic, is characterized by the angular letters, while the second style, the Naskhi, is a cursive style with rounded letters. The work of calligraphy is often ably complemented by that of the book binders. The leather used to cover [213] books is looted or stamped with gold, with the designs as described above, the decoration being on both the inside and the outside of the cover.

000 Khotan is the most famous of the cities in Sinkiang in the

/Turkic Peoples of Sinkiang/

286 Khotan is the most famous of the cities in Sinkiang in the
531 production of the famous oriental rugs, in needlework and also
197 in metal works (Kashgar and Yarkand are also important centers of rug weaving). The design of many of the rugs is a most interesting mixture of Persian and Chinese styles. The whole treatment is unmistakeably Persian, though many small details are Chinese. The same blending of the Far with the Near East is found in the beautiful embroidery of Khotan. The stitch chiefly used in the embroidery is the Turkish chain stitch, which is not found in the embroidery in China, but the wave and cloud patterns, the butterflies and some of the flowers are definitely of Chinese design. Khotan is also famous for its craftsmanship in brass and copper household utensils decorated with elaborate floral designs in pierced metal work.

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286 Kuch in the north has been famous for generations for the
294 gold and silver embroidery on velvet. Women's indoor caps are
531 the chief article of manufacture. The design as a whole is Per-
[197] sian, but the use of circular medallions in embroidery on robes is a Chinese device.

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178 There has been a tremendous decline in all these works of art and articrafts in the present century, mainly because of the availability of factory-manufactured cheap objects of daily use, from both Russia and China proper. Thus, the carpets of Khotan and the surrounding country are slowly disappearing, and their quality has gone down. The expensive handmade items are replaced by the cheap materials provided by modern industry. The class of artists and artisans has declined, since it is impossible for them to compete with new imported products.

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668 The artistic expressions inspired by the new Communist regime are totally different from the old indigenous ones. They center around paintings and statues glorifying the present-day leaders, and describing episodes from the life of the newly "liberated" working class. Nothing could be more foreign to the spirit and traditions of the Eastern Turkis.

E. Music and Dance

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527 The taste for music and dance is highly developed in Sinkiang, and it constitutes the main means of entertainment for important social occasions. There are professional musicians (maghmatchi) organized in bands of three or four individuals, available for hire. At many public feasts, a band is hired for entertainment. The musicians chant as they play their instruments. The tunes are simple, composed primarily for accompaniment to the dance, or, more often, improvised. To the Western-trained ear, both tune and rhythm are monotonous.

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[197] Most of the musical instruments used in these bands are of Persian origin. Grenard lists the following instruments:

Doutar—a long guitar with two strings.